

Message Text

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PAGE 01 QUITO 02410 131759Z
ACTION ARA-14

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 MCT-01 CIAE-00 NSAE-00 NSCE-00
SSO-00 ICAE-00 INRE-00 ACDA-12 IO-13 OMB-01 EB-08
TRSE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-10 L-03 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15
HA-05 AID-05 PC-01 OPR-02 A-01 SY-05 OC-06 CCO-00
OES-07 NASA-01 /120 W
-----126983 131805Z /41

O R 131738Z APR 78
FM AMEMBASSY QUITO
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 7912
INFO AMEMBASSY LA PAZ
AMEMBASSY LIMA
AMCONSUL GUAYAQUIL
DIA WASHDC
USCINCSO QUARRY HEIGHTS CZ
24TH CONTW HOWARD AFB CZ/IN

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E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: PORS, EC
SUBJECT: PUBLIC DISORDERS DIMINISH

REF: QUITO 2398

1. FOLLOWING THE APRIL 11 PEAK OF VIOLENCE RESULTING FROM
PROTESTS AGAINST BUS FARE INCREASES THE LEVEL AND SERIOUSNESS
OF DISTURBANCES DIMINISHED APRIL 12.

2. THE CITY'S EARLY MORNING NEWSPAPERS GAVE LESS
ATTENTION TO YESTERDAY'S ACTIVITIES. MILD STUDENT ACTIVITIES
WERE OCCURRING AT CATHOLIC UNIVERSITY THE MORNING OF APRIL
13 BUT LESS THAN AT LEVELS CHARACTERIZING THE PROBLEMS EARLY
IN THE WEEK. ALSO, THE WORRISOME PROSPECT OF A STUDENT
ASSOCIATION (FEUE) DEMONSTRATION AT CENTRAL UNIVERSITY COMM-
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EMORATING THE EIGHTH ANNIVERSARY OF THE DEATH OF A STUDENT
LEADER AT THE HANDS OF THE POLICE SCHEDULED FOR THE AFTERNOON
HOURS OF APRIL 12 FAILED TO CREATE SERIOUS PROBLEMS.

3. ALTHOUGH WE HESITATE TO DEFINITELY PREDICT THAT THE
DISTURBANCES ARE ENDING, IT MAY BE THAT THEIR MOMENTUM IS
WANING SUFFICIENTLY SO THAT THEY WILL NOT SURVIVE THE UPCOMING

WEEKEND. THE GOVERNMENT'S FIRMNESS ON THE BUS FARE INCREASE AND THE THREAT OF A LOST YEAR OF STUDIES, COMBINED WITH THE CONTINUED ATTEMPTS OF THE BUS OPERATORS TO PROVIDE SERVICE AND THE CALM ACCEPTANCE OF THE SAME INCREASE IN GUAYAQUIL, MAY HAVE THE CUMULATIVE EFFECT OF DIMINISHING THE ARDOR OF THE DEMONSTRATORS.

4. PERHAPS SIGNIFICANTLY, NO ATTACKS THUS FAR HAVE BEEN DIRECTED SPECIFICALLY AGAINST USG PERSONNEL, ALTHOUGH INDIVIDUALS HAVE SUFFERED THE SAME RANDOM INCONVENIENCES AS MUCH OF THE QUITO PUBLIC. THE DISTURBANCES HAVE BEEN PARTICULARLY BOTHERSOME TO THE NASA TRACKING STATION, WHICH MUST FERRY OVER A 100 PERSONS BACK AND FORTH BETWEEN QUITO AND THE STATION 40 MILES SOUTH. YESTERDAY, WHEN GROUPS OF STUDENTS EXTENDED THEIR BARRICADE OPERATIONS TO THE CITY'S SOUTH HIGHWAY, SEVERAL NASA VEHICLES WERE HARASSED AND DELAYED (AS WERE ALL NON-NASA VEHICLES). THIS EXPERIENCE PERHAPS PROMPTED AN ECUADOREAN NATIONAL NASA EMPLOYEE TO USE HYPERBOLIC AND ALARMIST LANGUAGE WHEN DISCUSSING THE INCIDENTS LAST NIGHT WITH THE GODARD SPACE CENTER, CAUSING, WE UNDERSTAND, SOME CONCERN THERE. CORR

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